

THE SKEPTIC'S CHECKLIST

Seven questions to grill any staffing agency with — including us.

Use this before you sign with any agency. A good agency can answer every one of these clearly. A bad agency will change the subject. Ask us the same seven — we'll answer all of them in 30 minutes.

01 What is your fill rate — and how do you measure it?

Any agency worth hiring can answer this with a number, not a story. Ask for their 30-day and 90-day fill rates for orders like yours. "We do our best" is not a fill rate.

What to listen for: A specific percentage. Anything below 90% for day-one show rate deserves a follow-up.

02 What is your 30-day retention rate for new placements?

Most placements that fail, fail in the first two weeks — quietly. If an agency can't give you a retention number, they're not tracking it. If they're not tracking it, they don't know their own performance.

What to listen for: A number. Not "we have low turnover" — an actual percentage.

03 Who calls the worker on day 3 — and what do they do with what they hear?

Retention requires proactive contact in the first two weeks. If the answer is "the worker calls us if there's a problem," that's your answer. Problems don't get reported. They become no-shows.

What to listen for: A named role, a fixed schedule (day 1, 3, 7, 14), and a process for what happens when a worker raises an issue.

04 How do your workers get to the job site?

Most no-shows are transportation failures, not attitude problems. Ask what percentage use public transit, personal vehicles, or agency-provided transport. If they don't know, they haven't solved the problem.

What to listen for: Routes, drivers, backup plans — or data on the transportation breakdown of their workforce.

05 What background checks and drug tests do you run — and when?

Checks and tests should happen before the first shift, every time. In food processing and manufacturing, one unvetted worker is a liability. Ask for the specific panel and how results are documented.

What to listen for: "Before placement" not "upon request." A named test type (5-panel, 10-panel). Documentation they can produce.

06 What does your launch process look like for a new client?

A real process has a checklist, a timeline, and a named owner. "We handle it" is not a process. You want to know who does what, by when, and what happens if something isn't ready 48 hours before day one.

What to listen for: A specific sequence. If they can't describe it in 90 seconds, it doesn't exist.

07 What happens when someone doesn't show up?

Every agency has no-shows. The question is whether they have a backup system — a bench, a pool, a call protocol — or whether they start scrambling and calling you with excuses at 5:45 AM.

What to listen for: A backup pool behind every active order. A named escalation path. A response time commitment.

Ask us the same seven. We'll answer all of them — on the record — in 30 minutes.

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